

THE LEISURE HOUR.

A FAMILY JOURNAL OF INSTRUCTION AND RECREATION.

"BEHOLD IN THESE WHAT LEISURE HOURS DEMAND,—AMUSEMENT AND TRUE KNOWLEDGE HAND IN HAND."—*Couper.*



A VISIT IN STATE.

1776.

A TALE OF THE AMERICAN WAR OF INDEPENDENCE.

CHAPTER XXVIII.—A DARK SECRET REVEALED.

CONSTANCE saw and heard no more, for Sydney led her away from the shocking scene to where the road was skirted by a grassy bank.

"Sit down here and rest for a minute," he said; "you have been overwrought, Constance. Lean on my shoulder as you used to do when you were tired in our long rambles through the Holyoke Woods."

No. 1277.—JUNE 17, 1876.

"Oh, Sydney, you have saved my life this day." She leaned on his shoulder, and he threw his arm round her as in the old familiar times. How much had happened since they parted!

"Thank Providence that I came in time. But take breath, and tell me who is that woman, and why did she attack you?" said Sydney.

Constance related the whole transaction as it occurred.

"Cecil Devereux—his lawful wife?" repeated the

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PRICE ONE PENNY.

young man. "The woman is mad, of course; nothing but madness could have made her fall on you. But, Constance, there is truth in her wild sayings. Lieutenant Gray, who knows a good deal of the captain's history, told me as much at the door of his own hut beside Fort Frederick; and if that unhappy woman lives, it may be possible to prove it yet. But now tell me one thing—honestly, Constance, and before the Ever-present, who alone can hear and judge between us: is it true what the lieutenant told me Mrs. Danby gives out—that you have been engaged to Devereux for some time, and they are all coming here shortly to celebrate the wedding?"

"Mrs. Danby has been kind to me, and I have a right to speak well of her," said Constance; "but that tale is false, whoever tells it. There never was an engagement between me and Captain Devereux, and there never will be while I keep my senses. He proposed for me, and my father was inclined to the match; but I never encouraged—I never liked him, Sydney."

"It takes a burden off my heart to hear you say so," said Sydney, immensely relieved, "for I was foolish enough to believe the report, because it seemed to come from such well-informed quarters; and that, together with the promise I made to my father, kept me from trying to meet you as I might have done many a time. Maybe I am not keeping the said promise now; but you once made a sort of engagement with one Sydney Archdale, when he was hiding in the Holyoke Woods; I know it depended on your father's consent; but are you inclined to keep it still, Constance?"

"I am, Sydney; but only on the same condition. I would not vex my father in the time of his prosperity, and far less would I do so now in his poor unlucky days; indeed, I partly expected you had forgotten all about it, now that you are a colonel in the patriot army, and we poor confiscated Tories." But the girl's look did not mean what she said, and young Archdale knew it.

"If you were ten times confiscated and twenty times Tories I should think myself fortunate—ay, if they put me in the place of General Washington, which Providence forefend, for the country would make a poor exchange—provided you would keep that old woodland engagement, and wait to see what time would do for us in the way of altering your father's views."

"Well, there is my hand upon it," said Constance.

He took the small white hand she offered, pressed and kissed it, and vowed and protested, after the manner of lovers in their fervid folly, as an old bachelor would say, till Constance noticed that it was getting dark, and started up with, "What a shame it is for me to leave my poor father so long alone; for charity's sake let me go, Sydney."

"I'll see you home," he said; "for I know the way to your house; if it were beyond the Rocky Mountains I should find it; and never fear, your father shall not see me; I would not give him cause of vexation any more than yourself."

Sydney kept his word, and took leave of her at a turn of the road, which, though close to the house, could not be seen from it for intervening trees. There were plans and promises of future meetings between them; but when Constance reached the garden gate, there stood the squire anxiously looking out for her. "Come into the parlour, child; I have

news for you," he said. She followed him; and after carefully closing the door he handed her an open letter. "The Tory runner brought me that an hour ago. Read it for yourself, and tell me what you think of it."

The girl's heart failed her at the first glance over that epistle; it was from Cecil Talbot Devereux, and set forth that, though circumstances over which he had no control, and which he would fully explain on the first opportunity, had prevented him from paying his respects to Squire Delamere and his charming daughter for a considerable time, yet his friendship for the one and his love for the other had undergone no change; and having, by the sudden decease of his uncle, succeeded to the family title and estate, he was on his way, and would probably arrive early in the following evening, to lay them both, together with his heart, "at the feet of the beautiful—the incomparable Miss Delamere."

The captain added that he had heard with deep regret how, in common with many loyal subjects, the squire had been involved in misfortune by the temporary triumph of rebellion; but if he would consent to accompany him, "and might not one say his bride?" to England, the Lavenham family had influence enough to obtain a government appointment adequate to his losses for the royal cause, till law and order should be re-established in the American provinces, and he could return to his patrimony of the Elms.

"There's what I call a true lover," said Delamere, looking more gratified than anybody had seen him look for many a day; "in haste to press his suit when he has come to title and estate, and we have come to poverty. Constance, my girl, that is not the way of the world."

"It is not, father," said Constance, collecting herself as well as she could; "but there are tales about the captain which you ought to hear, and one of them I should have told you long ago—maybe you'll be angry with me—but I feared it would annoy you, and you had trouble enough at the time."

"I will not be angry, my child; come here and sit beside me, and tell me whatever it is."

She sat down by her father's side, and gave him a clear but quiet account of the captain's strange conduct on the day of her interview with Washington; what Mr. Archdale had told her on the subject, and the kind message he sent to him. Then she narrated her adventure that evening with the frantic woman who said she was Devereux's wife, and brought so many charges against him; how Sydney Archdale had saved her life at the risk of his own; and what he said about the woman's words being true. But Constance did not tell what else he said, nor what she said herself while they sat on the grassy bank.

"It was a noble action and a generous one, considering how I have behaved to the Archdales. My conscience has often smitten me for that. It was carrying things too far with an old and steady friend—I mean Sydney's father; and he spoke so kindly of me, and behaved so handsomely to you, child, when you were left alone in the rebel camp. If things were well with me now, I would go or send to ask Archdale's pardon; but I cannot," said Delamere, "when our fortunes are so low, and his party getting the upper hand. I wish I could make some acknowledgment to Sydney. I wish he was a loyal man; but there is no use in wishing. And to come back to the captain. That was a queer turn for a

soldier and a gentleman to take, in front of the rebel general's quarters, too. Surely he was not afraid of the Frenchman. Suppose there had been a quarrel, or the like, between them, Devereux is not such a coward. As to the woman's talk, she is crazy, poor soul, and the upset brain will imagine anything. However, the captain has promised a full explanation of his long absence; doubtless he will be able to give it on those heads also. In the meantime, we must not condemn a man on such slender evidence, especially when he comes forward so handsomely. The Lavenham coronet and estate would be a temptation to many a girl better situated than my poor Constance. Oh, child, I am troubled in my mind with fears of leaving you unprotected for some day. Perhaps it is superstitious to talk of the like, but I have such strange dreams; every night my poor boy Gervase is with me, and always talking of you. What he says I never can remember when I wake; maybe it is a warning that I am soon to die and leave you alone in the world. Some of our deepest divines have held that people might be warned in dreams, as the wise men from the east were when they departed into their own country another way."

"No, father, no!" and the loving daughter threw her arms about his neck. "You will not be taken from me for many a year, Providence is kinder than that. But do not ask me to marry the captain, I cannot do it; I have bad thoughts of him, father."

Delamere seemed startled by her last words. He looked down and sat silent for a minute or two, and then said, calmly, "Well, Constance, I do not ask you to do anything that is really against your mind; but think seriously on the matter, and when Devereux comes here, either accept or refuse him, which you think best, for the consent I promised him was conditional on yours."

Having thus left her fate to her own decision, the squire rose, for it was growing late, and Hannah Armstrong brought in the supper. Constance thought there was something like disappointment in his look; but he referred to the subject no more, and father and daughter kept apart by mutual consent for the greater part of the following day.

When the heat of its Midsummer afternoon was getting tempered by the evening breeze, and the first flush of sunset was tinging the western sky, the inhabitants of the small houses which formed a straggling hamlet at the country end of Chestnut Street were surprised to see a gentleman, riding in high state and fashion, with gold-laced coat, hat of the newest cock, and two liveried servants behind him, alight at the house with green palings and flower-beds in front.

It was Cecil Talbot Devereux, Viscount Lavenham, coming in the certain hope to woo Delamere's daughter successfully at last. The good and beautiful girl had charmed him from the first introduction. He loved her with all the heart that remained to him in the lees of an evil life. Moreover, there was a distant prospect of the Elms afforded to him and his family, through the putting down of the rebellion, which all their class confidently expected. In short, circumstances on all sides seemed in his favour. One would have known by the man's look and bearing that he believed his star to be in the ascendant; but "the feet of the Nemesis are shod with wool," says the classic proverb.

At the time when the new-made viscount rode up to the house with green palings, a group of four—

Dr. Adams, Caleb Sewell, Count de Valencourt, and Sydney Archdale—stood speaking low and earnestly in the accident ward of the old hospital of Philadelphia, which was said to owe its foundation to William Penn, but has been long ago superseded by a structure more in accordance with the dimensions and appearance of the modern city. Their meeting there was casual, though on the same subject. Each had come to inquire after the poor insane woman, whose fall on her own knife they had witnessed on the preceding day; but Dr. Adams had been at the hospital some time before the others. His business in the neighbourhood was to see Susanna Stoughton. He had made the journey from Massachusetts at the request of her father and mother, but naturally took an interest in the case which had occurred before his eyes, and his professional reputation made him in a manner free of every medical institution.

"She has fallen into a state of unconsciousness," he said, in reply to a question from Sydney Archdale, "and may never recover, for, as far as I understand the symptoms, she has not many hours to live."

"Are you sure of that?" cried a voice which startled them all. The woman had partially raised herself in the bed, and was looking from one to another of the four, as if to recognise them.

"Are you sure of that?" she repeated, in a sharper tone. The fire of insanity had passed from her eyes and given place to a look of mingled fear and anxiety.

"Life and death are in the hand of God," said the doctor; "but if you have any worldly affairs to settle, I advise you to do so without delay."

"I have no affairs—Devereux has left me none," said the woman; "but I have something to tell which I cannot die with on my mind. Is there anybody here that knows Squire Delamere?"

"We are all friends of Squire Delamere," said Sydney Archdale; "and whatever you tell us shall certainly be told to him."

"You are the young man that saved his daughter from me—God bless you for that. I am glad I did not do it now; and she so kind to my son, Philip. Poor boy, to think of him serving strangers; and his father's property—all that Devereux couldn't spend and destroy of it—remaining for him in Jamaica. Will anybody go and tell them that he is the rightful heir? But listen, I have more than that to say," and she looked fixedly at Sydney. "If you are his friend, go and tell Squire Delamere that the man he thinks a grand match for his daughter is the murderer of his son. I followed him from his lodgings in the back street, and saw him do the deed in the garden of the old inn at Versailles; and all the city knew why it was done. He called himself Courteney Percival then, and pretended to be a West Indian. I don't know if I will be forgiven for keeping it so long, but I have told it now. He won't get marrying her when I am gone," and the woman fell back with something between a laugh and a moan.

"Let us go at once, and tell the squire," said Sydney; "perhaps he may get here in time to hear the tale from her own lips and inquire into the truth of it."

"It is true, every word," said De Valencourt, who had been standing with folded arms and downcast eyes while the woman spoke. "I recog-

nised the assassin in the midst of the American camp, after searching every town in Europe for him in vain; and I will search every town in America—ay, every British garrison, if that be possible, and bring him to justice with my own hand, wherever I may find him, for I am the man whose unguarded youth young Delamere protected from his robbery at the hazard table, and in revenge was foully murdered by the villain."

EARLY CIVILISATION.

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VI.—THE CIVILISATIONS OF CENTRAL ASIA—ASSYRIA, MEDIA AND PERSIA, INDIA.

WHILE the Aryan civilisations, described in a former paper,* were developing themselves peacefully side by side, in the extreme west of the Asiatic continent, the region which juts out towards Europe, and is known by the name of Asia Minor, the more central portion of the continent—the Mesopotamian Plain, the great Iranic Plateau, and the Peninsula of Hindustan—was the scene of a struggle, not always peaceful, between three other types of human progress and advancement, which in those parts contended for the mastery. Two of these were, like the West-Asian civilisations, Aryan, while one, the Assyrian, was of an entirely different character. It is this last to which we propose to give the foremost place in the present paper, not that we should assign it a priority of beginning over the other two, but inasmuch as it reached earliest its full development, and so belongs, on the whole, to a more remote period in the world's history.

The Assyrian empire is regarded by some writers as having commenced above 2000 years B.C.† Ctesias declared‡ that a thousand years before the Trojan War a great chief, Ninus, had founded Nineveh, had established his dominion from the shores of the Egean to the sources of the Upper Oxus, and had left his throne to his descendants, who held it through thirty generations for above thirteen centuries. The date of Ctesias for the Trojan War§ was probably about B.C. 1200—1190; so that he must have meant to place the commencement of the Assyrian power about B.C. 2200. This view was long followed by writers on ancient history,|| by whom the authority of Ctesias, who passed seventeen years at the Court of Susa, and had access to the Persian archives, was regarded as paramount. There have been, however, at all times historians to whom the Assyrian chronology of Ctesias has seemed extravagant and unreal, who have thought little of his authority,¶ and have lowered his date for the establishment of the Assyrian empire by nine hundred or a thousand years. Statements in Herodotus and in Berosus could be adduced in favour of the more

moderate computation;* and it accorded better than that of Ctesias with the scattered notices contained in the Hebrew Scriptures. Thus, the shorter chronology has at all times held its ground against the longer one; and having approved itself to such writers as Volney, Heeren, B. G. Niebuhr, and Brandis, has in the present century been the view most generally accepted by historical critics.

The question, however, might have remained an open one for all time, either side of it being arguable, and the balance of probability appearing to different minds to incline differently, had not the discovery and decipherment of the cuneiform records come in to determine it. By their aid the connected histories of Assyria and Babylonia can now be traced back continuously, and with a chronology that, if not exact, is at least approximate, to the middle of the fifteenth century B.C.† It is now made clear‡ that, so far from there having been at this date a vast Assyrian empire, which for seven hundred and fifty years had ruled over all Asia, from the Mediterranean and Egean to the banks of the Oxus and the Indus, Assyria was really, in B.C. 1500—1400, a weak state, confined within narrow boundaries, and only just emerging from Babylonian tutelage, its earlier rulers having been called *patesi*, or "viceroys," and its monarchs at this period having only just begun to assume the grander and more dignified title of "kings of countries."§ The Assyrian empire does not commence till a century and a half later, B.C. 1300, when Tiglath-Nin (perhaps the Ninus of the Greeks) took Babylon,|| and established the predominance of Assyria over Lower as well as Upper Mesopotamia. We cannot date much earlier than this the commencement of that peculiar form of Semitic civilisation which is associated with the idea of Assyria, partly from the accounts of ancient writers,¶ but mainly from the recovered treasures of art and literature which line the walls and load the shelves of our museums.

The civilisation of the Assyrians was material rather than spiritual. Its main triumphs were in architecture, in glyptic and plastic art, in metallurgy, gem-cutting, and manufactures, not in philosophy, or literature, or science,** properly so called. According to some, its architecture went to the extent of producing edifices of a magnificence scarcely exceeded by the grandest buildings of any age or country—edifices four or five storeys in height, of varied outline, richly adorned from base to summit, and commandingly placed on lofty platforms of a solid and massive character. The restorations of Mr. Fergusson

* Herodotus (I. 95) placed the foundation of the Assyrian empire 520 years before the revolt of the Medes, which event he placed in the latter half of the eighth century B.C. Berosus (Fr. 11) made the Assyrians acquire preponderance over Babylon 526 years before the accession of Pul, who was contemporary with Manahem (2 K. xv. 19), and must therefore have reigned towards the middle of that century. Both notices point to a commencement of the empire in the course of the 13th century B.C.

† See the author's "Ancient Monarchies," vol. II. pp. 49-56, 2nd edit. ‡ M. Lenormant says emphatically and with good reason, "En effet des monuments positifs ne nous permettent plus aujourd'hui de douter que la monarchie Assyrienne n'ait débuté dans le quinzième siècle avant notre ère." ("Manuel d'Histoire Ancienne," vol. II. p. 56.)

§ See the "Records of the Past," vol. v. p. 51. || *Ibid.* p. 85.

¶ See especially Diod. Sic. II. Compare Ezek. xlii. 14-16.

** In engineering science, which is a practical matter, the Assyrians made considerable progress. They were well acquainted with the principle of the arch, and could span with it a space of 14 or 15 feet; they constructed tunnels through the solid rock, sluices, dams, and drains. They knew the use of the pulley, the lever, and the roller. They quarried and moved with a full sense of security masses of stone with which modern builders would scarcely venture to meddle. (See Layard, "Nineveh and Babylon," pp. 105-112.)

* See "Leisure Hour" for May, 1876, pp. 292-6.

† Clinton, "Fasti Hellenici," vol. I. p. 263 sqq.; Bérill's "Histoire Ancienne," vol. II. pp. 12-14.

‡ Ap. Diod. Sic. II. 22.

§ See Clinton, I. a. c.

|| As by Cephallion, Castor, Nicolas of Damascus, Troguus Pompeius, Velleius Paterculus, Josephus, Eusebius, Moses of Chorene, Syncellus, Dean Prideaux, Freret, Rollin, and others.

¶ Among the ancients, Aristotle, Plutarch, and Arrian; among the moderns, Scaliger, Niebuhr, and Mure have detected and denounced the ill-faith and charlatanism of Ctesias, who seems to have had an actual love of lying.

adopted by Mr. Layard,* present to the eye Assyrian facades whose grandeur is undeniable, while, if the style and luxuriance of their ornamentation is somewhat barbaric, yet the entire effect is beyond question splendid, striking, admirable. If these representations are truthful, if they really reproduce the ancient edifices, or even convey a correct impression of their general character, we must pronounce the Assyrian architecture to have attained results which the best architects of the present day could not easily outdo. Even if we hesitate to accept as ascertained fact conclusions which are in reality the ingenious conjectures of a fertile imagination, we must still allow that the actual remains sufficiently indicate a grandeur of conception and plan,† an appreciation of the fine effect of massiveness, and a variety and richness in ornament, which go far to show that the Assyrians were really great as builders, though it may be impossible, with such data as we possess, to restore or reconstruct their edifices.

If the remains of Assyrian architecture are such as to preclude an *exact* estimate of the merit to which the Assyrians are entitled as builders, with respect to their glyptic art it is quite otherwise. Here the remains are ample and, indeed, superabundant. The museums of London, Paris, and Berlin contain the spoils of the great Mesopotamian cities in such profusion that no one acquainted with them can lack the means of forming a decided opinion upon the artistic power of the people. Even such as are without the leisure or the opportunity of visiting these rich depositories and seeing the sculptures for themselves, may form a very tolerable judgment of them from the excellent works which have been published on the subject, as especially those of Mr. Layard and M. Botta.‡ The author of the present paper has also done his best to assist the public in forming correct views by placing before them the main features of Assyrian art in a condensed form in his "Monarchy of Assyria."§ Mr. Vaux, in his "Nineveh and Persepolis," and various writers in the "Dictionary of the Bible" and the "Bible Educator," have worked in the same direction; and the result is a very wide acquaintance with the products of Assyrian artists, if not a very exact critical appreciation of their merits.||

It may perhaps be allowed to the present writer to insert here, instead of a new criticism, the estimate which he formed of Assyrian glyptic art fifteen years ago, when fresh from a five years' study of the subject. "In the Assyrian sculpture it is the actual," he said,¶ "the historically true, which the artist strives to represent. Unless in the case of a few mythic figures connected with the religion of the country, there is nothing in the Assyrian bas-reliefs

which is not imitated from nature. The imitation is always laborious, and often most accurate and exact. The laws of representation, as we understand them, are sometimes departed from; but it is always to impress the spectator with ideas in accordance with truth. Thus the colossal bulls and lions have five legs, but in order that they may be seen from every point of view with four; the ladders are placed *edgewise* against the walls of besieged towns, but it is to show that they are ladders, and not mere poles; walls of cities are made disproportionately small, but it is done, like Raphael's boat, to bring them within the picture, which would otherwise be a less complete representation of the actual fact. The careful finish, the minute detail, the elaboration of every hair in a beard and every stitch in the embroidery of a dress, reminds us of the Dutch school of painting, and illustrates strongly the spirit of faithfulness and honesty which pervades the sculptures and gives them so great a portion of their value. In conception, in grace, in freedom and correctness of outline, they fall undoubtedly far behind the inimitable productions of the Greeks; but they have a grandeur, a dignity, a boldness, a strength, and an appearance of life which render them even intrinsically valuable as works of art; and, considering the time at which they were produced, must excite our surprise and admiration. Art, so far as we know, had existed previously only in the stiff and lifeless conventionalism of the Egyptians. It belonged to Assyria to confine the conventional to religion, and to apply art to the vivid representation of the highest scenes of human life. War in all its forms—the march, the battle, the pursuit, the siege of towns, the passage of rivers and marshes, the submission and treatment of captives—and the 'mimic war' of hunting, the chase of the lion, the stag, the antelope, the wild bull, and the wild ass—are the chief subjects treated by the Assyrian sculptors; and in these the conventional is discarded; fresh scenes, new groupings, bold and strange attitudes perpetually appear; and in the animal representations especially there is a continual advance, the latest being the most spirited, the most varied, and the most true to nature,* though perhaps lacking somewhat of the majesty and grandeur of the earlier.† With no attempt to idealise or go beyond nature, there is a growing power of depicting things as they are—an increased grace and delicacy of execution, showing that Assyrian art was progressive, not stationary, and giving a promise of still higher excellence, had circumstances permitted its development."

To their merit as sculptors and architects, the Assyrians added an excellent taste in the modelling of vases, jars, and drinking-cups, a clever and refined metallurgy, involving methods which, till revealed by their remains, were unknown to the moderns,‡ a delicacy in the carving of ivory and mother-of-pearl, a skill in gem-engraving, glass-

* See the coloured print, which stands first in Mr. Layard's "Monuments of Nineveh," second series, and the frontispiece to his "Nineveh and Babylon."

† Mr. Fergusson says with truth, "The Imperial palace of Sennacherib is, of all the buildings of antiquity, surpassed in magnitude only by the great palace-temple of Karnak; and when we consider the vastness of the mound on which it was raised, and the richness of the ornaments with which it was adorned, it is by no means clear that it was not as great, or at least as expensive, a work as the great palace-temple at Thebes." (See his "Handbook of Architecture," vol. i. p. 179.)

‡ The two folios of Mr. Layard, entitled "Monuments of Nineveh, First Series," and "Monuments of Nineveh, Second Series," are works of great merit, highly creditable to English private enterprise. The "Monument of Nineveh" of M. Botta has all the magnificence and *luze* which naturally results from the French system of state subventions.

§ Forming part of his "Ancient Oriental Monarchies" (London, Murray, 1871, 2nd edit.).

¶ It is to be hoped that Englishmen generally form their estimate rather from the sculptures themselves in the British Museum, than from that coarse travesty of them which is to be seen in the "Assyrian Court" of a certain suburban building. (See "Ancient Monarchies," vol. i. p. 362.)

* Herodotus, vol. i. pp. 490, 497, 1st. edit.

* The hunting-scenes from the palace of Ashur-bani-pal (Sardanapalus of the Greeks) are the most perfect specimens of Assyrian glyptic art. They are to be seen in the *basement* room devoted to Assyrian art in the British Museum. Sir E. Landseer was wont to admire the truthfulness and spirit of these reliefs, more especially of one where hounds are pulling down a wild ass. ("Ancient Monarchies," vol. i. p. 517.) Professor Rolleston has expressed to me his admiration of a wounded lioness in the same series, where the paralysis of the lower limbs, consequent upon an arrow piercing the spine, is finely rendered. (*Ibid.* p. 512.)

† See Layard, "Monuments of Nineveh, First Series," p. 3; and compare "Ancient Monarchies," vol. i. p. 345.

‡ Layard, "Nineveh and Babylon," p. 191, note.

blowing and colouring, brick-enamelling, furniture-making, and robe-embroidering,* which place them beyond question among the most advanced and elegant of Oriental peoples, and show that, from a material point of view, their civilisation did not fall very greatly behind that of the Greeks. Combined with this progress in luxury and refinement, and this high perfection of the principal arts that embellish and beautify life, their sculptures and their records reveal much which revolts and disgusts—savage punishments, brutalising war customs, a debasing religion, a cruel treatment of prisoners, a contempt for women, a puerile and degrading superstition—teaching the lesson, which the present age would do well to lay seriously to heart, that material progress, skill in manufactures and in arts, even refined taste and real artistic excellence, are no sure indications of that civilisation which is alone of real value, the civilisation of the heart, a condition involving not merely polished manners, but gentleness, tenderness, self-restraint, purity, elevation of mind and soul, devotion of the thoughts and life to better things than comfort or luxury, or the cultivation of the æsthetic faculties.

Iranic civilisation, or that of the Medes, the Persians, and (perhaps we should add) the Bactrians, is supposed by some moderns† to have originated as early as B.C. 3784. Others‡ assign to it the comparatively moderate date of B.C. 2600—2500. The writer, however, who is most conversant with the early Iranic writings, and most competent to judge of their real age, Dr. Martin Haug, does not think it necessary to postulate for his favourites, the Iranians, nearly so great an antiquity. Haug suggests|| the fifteenth century B.C. as that of the most primitive Iranic compositions, which form the chief, if not the sole, evidence of an Iranic cultivation prior to B.C. 700.

The question is one rather of linguistic criticism than of historic testimony. The historic statements that have come down to us on the subject of the age of Zoroaster, with whose name Iranic cultivation is by general consent regarded as intimately connected, are so absolutely conflicting that they must be pronounced valueless. Eudoxus and Aristotle¶ said that Zoroaster lived 6,000 years before the death of Plato, or B.C. 6348. Hermippus** placed him 5,000 years before the Trojan War, or B.C. 6184. Berosus declared of him that he reigned at Babylon towards the beginning of the twenty-third century before our era,†† having ascended the throne, according to his chronological views, about B.C. 2286. Xanthus Lydus,‡‡ the contemporary of Herodotus, and the first Greek writer who treats of the subject, made him live six hundred years only before the invasion of Greece by Xerxes, or B.C. 1080. The later Greeks and Romans declared that he was contemporary with Darius Hystaspis,§§ thus making his date about B.C. 520—485. Between the earliest and

the latest of these authorities, the difference (it will be seen) is one of nearly *six thousand years!*

Modern criticism doubts whether Zoroaster ever lived at all, and regards his name as designating a period rather than a person.* The period intended is that of the composition of the earliest portions of the Zendavesta. To these portions, which are poems, and in the original bear the name of Gâthas, Haug (as we have already stated) assigns as the most probable date about B.C. 1500. We see no reason for doubting the soundness of this expert's judgment, and we incline, therefore, to regard Iranic civilisation as having commenced somewhat earlier than Assyrian.

Of this primitive civilisation, whereof the seat seems to have been Bactria, rather than Media or Persia, we possess no actual remains, no tangible or material evidences. The only existing proofs of it are the Zendic writings; and the only notion of it which we can gain is that derivable from a careful study of these writings, or rather of their most ancient portions. From these we gather that the primitive Iranians were a settled people, possessing cities of some size, that they were devoted to agriculture, and fairly advanced in the arts most necessary for human life. They had domesticated certain animals, as the horse, the cow, and the dog. They knew how to extract an exhilarating liquor from the Soma or Homa plant, the acid *Asclepias*, or *Sarcostema viminialis*. They lived peaceably together, and recognised the supremacy of law. They had formed the conception of poetry, and, while some could frame, the generality could appreciate the beauty of metrical compositions. Above all, they had a religion, which was surprisingly pure and elevated,† consisting mainly in the worship of a single supreme God, an all-wise, all-bounteous Spirit, Ahura-mazda.

The cultivation thus begun about B.C. 1500 in the far-off and little known Bactria, received a fresh impulse towards the middle of the ninth century B.C., when the Iranians first came into contact with the Assyrians.‡ Migratory movements had by this time brought the Medes into the district which thenceforth bore their name; and, having thus become neighbours of the Assyrians, whose civilisation was already advanced, they could not but gain something from their novel experience. Among the chief gains made was probably that of writing. The wedge was adopted as the element out of which letters should be composed, and an alphabet was formed far less cumbersome than the Assyrian syllabary, whereby it became easy to express articulate sound by written symbols, and so to give permanency to the transient and fleeting phenomena of ordinary spoken language.

Further advances were made between the end of the seventh and the middle of the fifth century B.C., about which time Iranian cultivation reached its greatest development. The Medes first (B.C. 630),

* For details the writer must once more refer to his "Assyrian Monarchy," where the entire subject of Assyrian art and manufacture is carefully worked out. (See ch. vi.)

† For proofs of this, see "Records of the Past," vol. i. pp. 133-5, and vol. v. pp. 169-176.

‡ See Baron Bunsen, "Egypt," vol. v. p. 77.

§ Lenormant, "Manuel d'Histoire Ancienne de l'Orient," vol. ii. p. 307.

|| Haug, "Essays on the Sacred Language, Writings, and Religion of the Parsees," p. 225.

¶ Ap. Plin. "Hist. Nat.," xxx. 2.

** *Ibid.*

†† Berosus, Fr. 11, compared with Syncellus, "Chronographia," p. 137.

‡‡ Xanth. Lyd. Fr. 29.

§§ Agathina p. 117 C.; Arnob. i. 52; Clem. Alex. "Stromata," i. p. 357; Apuleius, "Florida," ii. p. 231.

* Bunsen waives "the personality of the prophet" when he is discussing the date of Zoroastrianism ("Egypt's Place," vol. iii. p. 471). Lenormant inclines to regard Zoroaster as a person, but confesses that his existence is "enveloped in an obscurity which will probably remain for ever impenetrable" ("Manuel d'Histoire Ancienne," vol. ii. p. 208). Niebuhr consigns him altogether to the region of myth ("Kl. Schriften," vol. i. p. 200).

† Lenormant says with truth, "La doctrine de Zoroastre est sans contredit le plus puissant effort de l'esprit humain vers le spiritualisme et la vérité métaphysique, sur lequel on ait essayé de fonder une religion en dehors de la révélation et par les seules forces de la raison naturelle; elle est la doctrine la plus pure, la plus noble, et la plus voisine de la vérité parmi celles de l'Asie et de tout le monde antique, à part celle des Hébreux, basée sur la parole divine." ("Manuel," vol. ii. pp. 308-9.)

‡ The contact appears in the cuneiform remains of this century ("Ancient Monarchies," vol. ii. 101-110).

and the Persians afterwards (b.c. 560), attained to the leading position among the Oriental nations, and, inheriting the power, entered also into possession of the accumulated knowledge and civilisation of the earlier masters of Asia. They did not, however, simply continue the past, or reproduce what they found existing. In the remains of Median and Persian times, found at Hamadan (Ecbatana), Behistun, Istakr (Persepolis), Nakhsh-i-Rustam, and Murghab (Pasargadæ), we have evidences of Iranian art and architecture, which are most remarkable, and which give the Medo-Persic people a very important position in the history of æsthetic culture. While adopting one or two leading features of building and ornamentation from their Semitic predecessors, the Iranic races in the main gave a vent to their own native genius and fancy, and the consequence was that they introduced into the world a wholly new architecture,* a style of high relief not previously attempted, and a method of decoration altogether their own, excellently well adapted to the character of their climate and country.†

The Iranic architecture was characterised, in the first place, by simplicity and regularity of design, and in the second by the profuse employment of the column. The buildings have for the most part a symmetry and exactness resembling that of Greek temples.‡ They were emplaced on terraces formed of vast blocks of hewn stone,§ and were approached by staircases of striking and unusual design. Double porticos of eight, twelve, or sixteen columns, gave entrance into pillared halls, where the columns were sixteen, thirty-six, or (in one instance) as many as one hundred in number. Originally the pillars may have been mere wooden posts,|| such as are commonly used in the domestic architecture of most nations where wood is plentiful. These, when wealth flowed in, it became the practice to overspread with thin sheets of the precious metals.¶ But after a while the Iranic architects, having to erect palaces in districts where wood was scarce, conceived the idea of substituting shafts of stone for the original wooden posts, and carried out their notion so successfully, that at last they were able to poise in air pillars sixty-four feet high, having beautifully slender shafts, rich bases, and capitals of an elegant, but perhaps somewhat too elaborate, composition. The halls constructed on these supports extended over so vast an area that moderns have found no existing constructions with which they could compare them but the most ambitious of European cathedrals. Speaking of the Chehl Minar, or Great Hall of Xerxes, at Persepolis, Mr. Fergusson says: "We have no cathedral in England that at all comes near it in dimensions; nor, indeed, in France or Germany is there one that covers so much ground. Cologne comes nearest to it . . . but in linear horizontal dimensions the *only* edifice of the middle ages that comes up to it is Milan Cathedral, which covers 107,800 feet, and (taken all in all) is perhaps the building that resembles it most, both in style and the

general character of the effect it must have produced on the spectator."*

For the ornamentation of their buildings, externally, and to some extent internally, the Iranians, imitating their Semitic predecessors, employed sculpture. They did not, however, follow slavishly the pattern set them, but in important respects improved upon their models. They adopted generally a style of much higher relief than that which had prevailed in Assyrian times, sometimes almost disengaging their figures from the background,† sometimes carving them both in front and at the side, so that they did not fall far short of being statues.‡ They gave to their human heads great dignity,§ and imparted to some animal forms|| a life and vigour never greatly surpassed. In variety and grace, however, they cannot be said to have equalled the Assyrians; and it is in their architecture, rather than in their glyptic art, that they give evidence of real originality and genius.

The internal decoration of palaces was especially admirable. "Such edifices as the Chehl Minar at Persepolis, and its duplicate at Susa—where long vistas of columns met the eye on every side, and the great central cluster was supported by lighter detached groups, combining similarity of form with some variety of ornament; where richly-coloured drapings contrasted with the cool grey stone of the building, and a golden roof overhung a pavement of many hues";¶ where a throne of gold under a canopy of purple stood on an elevated platform at one end,** backed by "hangings of white and green and blue, fastened with cords of white and purple to silver rings," attached to the "pillars of marble"; †† where carpets of dazzling brightness lay here and there upon the patterned floor, and through the interstices of the hangings were seen the bright blue sky and the verdant prairies and distant mountains of Khuzistan or Farsistan—must have been among the fairest creations with which human art ever embellished the earth, and beyond a doubt compared favourably with any edifices which, up to the time of their construction, had been erected in any country or by any people. It was in these glorious buildings that Iranian architecture culminated; and there is reason to believe that from them the Grecian architects gained those ideas which, fructifying in their artistic minds, led on to the best triumphs of Hellenic constructive art, the magnificent temples of Diana (Artemis) at Ephesus,‡‡ and of Minerva (Athéné) on the Acropolis of Athens.

Of Iranian literary cultivation, not much is known. There are no portions of the Zendavesta which can be positively assigned to the space between b.c. 900 and b.c. 330. The inscriptions of this period§§ are dry documents, and as compositions have little merit; but lapidary literature is rarely of an attractive kind. We are told that the Persians of the Achæmenian times (b.c. 560-330) had among them historians and

* Fergusson, "Palaces of Nineveh and Persepolis," pp. 171-2.

† See the representation, "Ancient Monarchies," vol. iii. p. 334, which is taken from a photograph.

‡ *Ibid.* p. 299.

§ The casts in the British Museum, taken from the Persepolitan sculptures, show this sufficiently. The sculptures themselves are still *in situ* for the most part.

|| As especially those of bulls and lions. (See "Ancient Monarchies," vol. iii. p. 339, and compare Flandin, "Voyage en Perse," vol. i. p. 126.)

¶ See "Ancient Monarchies," vol. iii. p. 232.

** *Ibid.* p. 291. †† Esther i. 6.

‡‡ See the "Ephesos" of Professor Curtius, recently published.

§§ These will be found in Sir H. Rawlinson's "Persian Cuneiform Inscriptions," published in the "Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society," vols. x. xi. xii., and in the "Altpersische Keilschriften" of Spiegel (pp. 5-45).

* Mr. Fergusson disputes this. He is of opinion that the Persian architecture was, in the main, a mere copy of the Assyrian, differing only in the substitution of stone pillars for wooden posts; but the use of wooden posts by the Assyrians is "not proven."

† See Loftus, "Chaldea and Susiana," p. 375.

‡ See the representation, "Ancient Monarchies," vol. iii. p. 230; and compare Rich's "Persepolis," p. 244.

§ Some of these at Persepolis are as much as fifty feet long, and from seven to ten feet broad. (See Flandin, "Voyage en Perse," vol. i. p. 77.)

¶ This seems to have been the case at Ecbatana ("Ancient Monarchies," vol. ii. p. 265).

‡ Polyb. x. 27. § 10.

poets;* but the productions of these early authors have perished, and we have no account of them that is to be depended on. Perhaps it is, on the whole, most probable that in the great work of Firdausi,† we have, in the main, a reproduction of the legends with which the antique poets occupied themselves, and so may gather from his pages a general idea of the style and spirit of the early Persian poetry.

In manners and general habits of life the Iranians did not differ greatly from the Assyrians. Their original religion was indeed of a high type, but it became corrupted as time went on,‡ and ultimately sank into a mere debasing and sensualistic nature-worship.§ Their war customs were less brutal than those of their predecessors, but their system of punishment was almost equally savage;|| they had the same low estimate of women; they were cruel and treacherous, voluptuous, luxurious, given to drunkenness.¶ Western Asia was perhaps better governed under their sway than it had ever been previously; but there was still much in their governmental system that was imperfect, and that fell short even of what is possible under a despotism. Their civilisation may be pronounced to have been, on the whole, more advanced than that of the Assyrians; it had a moral aspect; it was less merely material; but the highest qualities of real civilisation were absent from it, and it cannot be said to have laid the world at large under many obligations.

Indic civilisation is supposed to have commenced about the same time with Iranic. There are so many points of resemblance between the ancient hymns of the Rig-Veda and the Gāthas, allowed to form the most ancient portions of the Avesta, that it is almost impossible for persons familiar with both to assign them to periods very far apart. The ancestors of the Medes and Persians on the one hand, and of the Hindus upon the other, appear to have left their primitive abode about the same time, and to have embodied their earliest religious thoughts soon after they separated in poems of the same character. Thus, there is a general agreement among literary critics as to the near connection in date of the two literatures. With regard, however, to the actual period, great diversity of opinion prevails, the same variety of views** obtaining in respect of the earliest Vedas as we have already shown to exist with respect to the Gāthas of the Zendavesta. But here again the chief "expert" — the writer who has the largest acquaintance with the whole range of the Indian compositions, and with the general history of language, has expressed himself, in moderate terms, as favourable to a date which is, comparatively speaking, late. Professor Max Müller, in his "Ancient Sanskrit Literature," lays it down that there are four periods of Vedic composition—the Chandas period, Mantra period, Brahmana period, and Sutra period; and after an elaborate and exhaustive discussion, of which it is impossible not to

admire the candour and the learning, comes to the conclusion that the approximate date of each may be laid down as follows:—*

Chandas period . . .	1200 to 1000 B.C.
Mantra period . . .	1000 to 800 B.C.
Brahmana period . . .	800 to 600 B.C.
Sutra period . . .	600 to 200 B.C.

Thus, according to the highest living authority, the commencement of Vedic literature, and so of Indian civilisation, need not be placed further back than the beginning of the twelfth century B.C.

The civilisation which the writings of the Chandas period reveal is one of great simplicity.† Cities seem not to be mentioned; there is no organised political life; no war worthy of the name; nothing but plundering expeditions. Tribes exist under their heads, who are at once kings, priests, judges, and poets, and to whom the rest render obedience. Religion is a worship by hymns, and with simple offerings, as of honey, but scarcely yet with regular sacrifice. There is a power of metaphysical speculation which may perhaps surprise us, but which seems congenial to the Oriental mind; and there is evidence of progress in some of the mechanical arts beyond what might have been expected. Ships are familiar objects to the writers of the poems; chariots are in common use; the horse and cow are domesticated, and are sheltered in stables; armour is worn, and is sometimes of gold; shields are carried in battle; an intoxicating drink is brewed; dice have been invented, and gambling is not uncommon.

As time goes on, this extreme simplicity disappears.‡ There are advances of various kinds. Cities are built and magnificent palaces constructed; trades become numerous; luxury creeps in. The priests, having come to be a separate class, introduce an elaborate ceremonial. Music is cultivated; writing is invented or learnt. But, after all, the material progress made is not very great. Indian civilisation is, in the main, intellectual, not material. Careless of life and action, of history, politics, artistic excellence, trade, commerce, manufacture, the Indians concentrate their attention on the highest branches of metaphysics, ponder on themselves and their future, on the nature of the Divine essence, on their own relation to it, and the prospects involved in that relationship.§ They discuss and they solve the most difficult questions of metaphysical science; they elaborate grammar, the science of language, which is the reflected image of thought; they altogether occupy themselves with the inward, not with the outward—with the eternal world of mind and rest, not with the transitory and illusory world of outward seeming and incessant changefulness. Hence the triumphs of their civilisation are abstract and difficult to appreciate. They lie outside the ordinary interests of mankind, and are, moreover, shrouded in a language known to few, and from which there are but few translations. It is said, however, by those whose acquaintance with the early Indian literature is the widest, that there is scarcely a problem in the sciences of ontology, psychology, metaphysics, logic, or grammar, which the Indian sages have not sounded as deeply, and discussed as elaborately, as the Greeks. ||

* Herod. i. 1; Ctes. ap. Diod. Sic. ii. 32, § 4; Strab. xv. 3, § 13; Diod. ap. Athen. Deipn. xiv. p. 633, D.

† The "Shahnameh," or "Book of the Kings," a good idea of which may be gathered from the account and translations of Mr. Atkinson.

‡ The corruption had begun as early as the time of Herodotus (Herod. i. 131).

§ See "Ancient Monarchies," vol. iii. pp. 360-1.

|| Ibid. pp. 246-7.

¶ Herod. i. 133; Strab. xv. 3, § 20; Duris Sam. Fr. 13.

** Bunsen, whose date for Zoroaster is B.C. 3784, assigns the "oldest Vedic songs" to the period between B.C. 4000 and B.C. 3120 ("Egypt's Place," vol. iii. p. 573, compared with p. 564). Lenormant, who places Zoroaster between B.C. 2600 and B.C. 2500, believes the earliest portions of the Vedas to have been written between B.C. 3000 and B.C. 2600 ("Manuel d'Histoire Ancienne," vol. ii. pp. 301 and 305).

* See pp. 313, 445, 497, and 572.

† "Ancient Sanskrit Literature," pp. 525-572. Compare Lenormant's

"Manuel," vol. ii. p. 305; vol. iii. pp. 445-471.

‡ "Ancient Sanskrit Literature," pp. 71-924.

§ Strabo, xv. 59 and 65; Max Müller, pp. 18-32.

|| Lenormant, "Manuel," vol. iii. pp. 625-630.

A TRIP TO PALMYRA AND THE DESERT.

BY THE REV. WILLIAM WRIGHT, B.A., OF DAMASCUS.

VI.



BAB SHURKY, THE EASTERN GATE OF DAMASCUS.

DANGER in Syria soon loses the romance of novelty and the thrill of excitement. I remember with what feelings of horror I heard from our first landlord in Damascus that two of his brothers had been murdered in the room which we had made our parlour. He had come in one gusty

night to see how we liked our new quarters, and to keep us from feeling lonely, and with twitching mouth he said, pointing to where we sat, "There is where my two brothers were killed, and my father was murdered over there, and then they threw them all into that fountain outside." The wind made horrid noises about the house that night, and for many a day I fancied I could see the purple stains through the white straw matting. But we soon became familiar with such horrors. Three skeletons of murdered Christians were fished out of the well from which we had our first water. Our colporteur was brought in to us with his head laid open, and a little boy who had been in our school and our service was murdered by Druzes, and eaten up by dogs. Our mission-field lay along the border of the desert, and in ten years we had come to look calmly at the deeds of city and desert Ishmaelites.

It was not, however, without a sense of danger that we lay down for the night in full view of a band of well-armed, hardy spearmen, who had vowed to murder us, and who had a will to keep their vow. Our guard was sufficiently strong and well-armed to keep the enemy at a distance, but they were only Turks, and the Bedawin, on their splendid mares, might dash into our camp during the night, and overwhelm us in the confusion and darkness; and it was not pleasant to fancy a spear penetrating one's tent. I went round our sentinels several times, and they continued to swear, and brag, and keep guard, as long as we watched them; but no sooner had we lain down to sleep than they stacked their arms, rolled themselves up in their great-coats, and lay down to sleep likewise.

A little after midnight my servant awakened me, and told me that our soldiers were all snoring at the stars. I walked through, among them, and over them, and found them loudly asleep. I thought of the sleeping hosts of King Saul that had gone out to seize David, and I wondered if we could repeat David's trick on Saul.* In a few minutes my servant had the soldiers' rifles carried to beside my bed, and not a soldier had stirred. He then mounted guard himself, but as sleep under the circumstances was impossible, we roused our camp before dawn for the return journey. Then woke up the most indescribable Babel. The soldiers rushed about in search of their arms, frantic with rage, shame, fear. "The cowardly Bedawin had stolen their rifles while they slept, and would now fall upon them unarmed." The officers screamed at the men, and the men roared at the officers; and the choicest epithets in Arabic, Turkish, Kurdish, and Armenian were hurled about with dreadful fury. When the noise had reached the climax, I called over Brandy Bob, and quietly asked him what was all the shouting about. "Oh, sir," he replied, "I took my eyes off my men for an instant, and they have lost their rifles." "Nonsense!" I said. "You bragged how you would guard us, and then you all went and fell asleep. There are your weapons. My servant brought them here to keep the Bedawin from getting them, and then kept guard for you." The soldiers took their guns in silence, but, with the versatility of Falstaff, they all soon began to swear that they had seen me taking their rifles, and only wanted to humour me. We struck our tents in haste, and marched to 'Ain el-Wu'al; and on the following

day continued our homeward journey as far as Karyetein.

But what of the Bedawin who had encamped over against us? We had given them the slip, and as they never suspected that we had discovered the 'Ain el-Wu'al water, they pursued us, as they supposed, down the beaten track of ordinary tourists. All day long they spurred their animals in pursuit, and strained their eyes to catch a glimpse of us on the horizon before them. At last the gazelle-traps and gardens of Karyetein rose before them, and they felt that their prey had escaped. A council of war was held, at which it was the unanimous opinion that we had hid in some dip of the desert, or among the mountains, as it was clearly impossible that our baggage animals could have reached Karyetein in so short a time. It was then resolved* that they should lie across our track until we came up. All night long they watched in vain, but at eleven of the next morning, as they were about to give us up, a caravan suddenly appeared issuing from the mountains on the north. "Allahu Akbar!" (God is great,) shouted the delighted Bedawin, and tightening the girths on their hungry horses, and the girdles on their own empty stomachs, they rushed with a desert hurrah on the prey.

The caravan was conducted by the hardy villagers of Jebel Kalamoun, who were bringing provision for their families from the Euphrates; and they had, besides, Persian carpets, and tobacco, and other valuable merchandise for Damascus. They had just passed the most dangerous part of their journey, and had relaxed their ordinary vigilance, and were somewhat scattered, so that with the first onset the Bedawin cut off and captured a number of stragglers. These were withdrawn to a distance, and secured. The remainder of the caravan was now drawn up in a circle, and the camels were tightly bound together in a living rampart, from behind which the villagers fired on their assailants. "The Arab force," according to the "Levant Herald," "consisted of about twenty horsemen, accompanied by forty dromedaries, each carrying two armed riders. They were the Giath Bedawin, accompanied by the 'Amour, under Sheikh Dabbous." They and their horses took a hurried meal of the food they had captured, and then, flushed with victory, and with the prospect of large booty, they dashed boldly against the living rampart. A desperate struggle ensued. The line swayed and staggered; but in a hand-to-hand encounter the Bedawin had no chance with the able-bodied† villagers, and many of them were dragged from their horses and stricken down with clubs. The Bedawin then became more wary, and galloped round and round the circle, making a feint here, and an attack there, till the villagers were weary of rushing round their rampart, and their ammunition was exhausted. Thus they continued, hour after hour, till near sunset, when a wounded camel staggered and fell, and broke the line. The circle opened out and became a crescent. Quick as lightning, the Bedawin rushed in at the breach, the camels started off in all directions, and the active horsemen, with their flashing spears, decided the victory in a few minutes. The "Levant Herald"

* These details I have from one of the Bedawin, who kindly called on me in Damascus and gave me all particulars.

† The Bedawin are much smaller-bodied men than the Fellahin of the villages. Colonel Gawler, the keeper of the Crown jewels, informs me that the suits of armour preserved in the Tower are too small for ordinary men.

summed up the result of this raid thus:—"The Bedawin took possession of, and carried off, all that the caravan contained—120 loads of butter (semmen), and an enormous number of donkeys, mules, camels, horses, arms, valued at £4,000. In addition to this, they stripped all the travellers, and left them naked in the blazing desert. They even stripped the dead. The brothers of the murdered men remained to watch the bodies till an animal was brought to convey them to the village. They succeeded in protecting themselves from the heat by day, and the cold by night, with rags from the furniture of a camel that was shot in the *mélée*. The unfortunate men are industrious people, inhabitants of Nebk, Deir-Atiyeh, Rahibey; one of them is from Damascus. They were mostly heads of hungry families, and pay taxes to the Sultan for his protection. There is no reason why this state of things should be permitted to exist. The force in existence is the same with which Subhi Pasha kept the desert in almost perfect order. The Bedawy marauders are within easy reach of the Government. When the case was laid before Halet Pasha, he merely said that Karyetein was outside the bounds of Syria. Those who were present corrected his Excellency's geography, and he caused a sharp telegram to be sent to some of his subordinates," and with them the matter rested.

This report from the chief newspaper at Constantinople I know to be correct in every detail. I knew several of the murdered men, and one of them, Shibley Kasis, of Nebk, was brother-in-law to our chief Protestant in that district.

What would the Bedawin do with one hundred and twenty loads of butter? They brought it, or rather got it brought, into Damascus, and had it sold publicly. What would they do with the splendid carpets and shawls from the looms of Persia and Cashmere? They distributed them among their powerful friends in Damascus in return for their efficient protection, and some of the best found their way into the gorgeous saloons of those whose duty it was to administer justice. One of our Protestants found three of his camels in the hands of the robbers, and though he got an official order for the restoration of his property, he was never able to get it carried out, and the robbers were permitted to keep his camels.

We rested a day at Karyetein, and had the pleasure of finding that our school had taken root among Moslems and Christians; and we saw Moslems and Christians sitting side by side in that land of violence and blood, and spelling out together the story of Christ's love to men. In the evening we heard that a battle was being fought near by, and I believe the report of the guns was distinctly heard; but the Sheikh said the Turks were there to protect the district, and the Turks smoked their nargilleys, and ejaculated "Allâh is great," and did nothing.

We finished the day by visting and receiving the visits of our friends, and on the following morning continued our homeward journey, before receiving the details of the battle. We passed several ruined khans—resting-places for caravans and travellers in more propitious times; had several spurts after gazelles with our Persian greyhound; caught a fox alive and a curious land rat; and, after a weary ride, encamped at 'Atny, a few miles west of a salt lake that glowed and sparkled in the evening sun.

Here, too, we were met by "rumours of oppression and deceit." The Ishmaelites had been to the

village three hours before us, and had carried off several flocks of sheep, and all the donkeys and camels and portable things they could find.

Any one who makes a tour through Northern Syria will be able to appreciate for the remainder of his life the advantages of a civilised government. He will there see as fine a peasantry as is to be found anywhere—handsome and courteous, but picturesque in rags; thrifty and frugal, but penniless; comparatively truthful and enterprising, but without credit or resources. They have broad acres which only require to be scratched and they bring forth sixty-fold, but they only cultivate little patches, surrounded by mud walls, and within range of their matchlocks. During the greater part of the year they dare not walk over their own uncultivated fields for fear of being stripped of their tattered garments.* And yet these poor people are the most heavily-taxed peasantry in the world. They pay "black mail," called *Khowich* (brotherhood), to the Bedawin, who plunder them notwithstanding. And they pay taxes to the Turks, who give them no protection in return. The Bedawin's claim is from time immemorial, and they enforce their claim by cutting off the ears of peasants from the defaulting villages, and by carrying off a number of the village children into the desert. The latter plan always brings the villages to terms. The Turks enforce their claims by imprisoning the village Sheikhs in foul, pestiferous sties, without food, till they have paid the uttermost farthing. These spoilers follow on each other's heels, and that which the Turkish caterpillar leaves the Bedawy locust devours. With anything like protection or fair government, the peasantry of Northern Syria would be among the happiest in the world; but for the last ten years they have seen the fruit of their labour swept away by organised robbers, and they have lived in a state of starvation and despair. All who can get away leave for Egypt and for the large cities, and the region is becoming depopulated year by year.

It was pleasant to see how lightly sorrow sat on the simple people of 'Atny. When we arrived they were plucking at their beards and rending their garments, and calling for vengeance from heaven on their spoilers and on the Turks. Toward sunset, however, the ceremony of marrying the Sheikh's daughter, a mature maiden of twelve, was commenced, and the people danced, and sung, and shouted, and clapped their hands, and the women sent up shrill notes of joy, and the old Sheikh scattered sweetmeats among the revellers, and all seemed merry and light-hearted, as if they had sat all their lives under their own vines and fig-trees, with none to molest or make them afraid.

The bawling and screaming came to an end about midnight, but soon broke out again. Somebody's house had been plundered, and the people were all proclaiming it from the housetops. The women's voices were still in tune, and they howled as if they had been robbed of their most precious treasures. I had been giving battle to a number of persevering mosquitos up till this new disturbance arose, but finding that sleep was impossible, and that I no

* The "Levant Herald" of 12th August, 1874, referring to this subject, points out that "three villages, not the most important, have lost 7,630 sheep and goats, 55 camels, 32 donkeys, and an enormous amount of other property, besides shepherds and drivers killed and wounded. The other villages have suffered equal losses, and the people are in a state of despair."

† Are not the cries of the oppressed, which have gone up to heaven unceasingly for the last 400 years, being heard and answered?

longer required the protection of my companion's escort, I started alone, in the dark, for Damascus. I passed through Jeyroud, Muaddamiyeh, and El-Kutifeh while the people were still sleeping. The dogs lay thick in the streets, and my horse had difficulty in threading his way among them. They were too lazy and sleepy to even bark at me. The night was long, but at last the tops of the mountains were touched with gold, and as the plain of Damascus burst upon me through the Eth-thuniyeh Pass, the rising sun was pouring its first rays into a surging sea of verdure and beauty, and lighting up the minarets of hamlet and city with tongues of fire.

No wonder all Orientals rave over the beauties of Damascus. At all seasons of the year, and from every point of view, Damascus is beautiful; but its beauty is enhanced tenfold by the fact that you can only approach it through a howling wilderness. Your eye has been resting on the heavens as brass

and the earth as iron. Every green thing is a prickly shrub. Desolation and dreariness and sterility reign on every side. Suddenly you turn a corner, and your eye rests on Paradise.

A gallop down the hill, and I was among luxurious harvests. Then I passed through miles of orchards, golden with ripe apricots—the paths overspread by fragrant walnuts. Crystal waters tumbled in cascades over the walls, and ran bubbling by the side of the road. At last I reached *Bab Shurky*, the eastern gate of Damascus, in which the Roman arch is still visible; and as I passed through where Khaled and his fiery Saracens first entered the city, my heart sank as I saw a Turkish soldier levying "black mail" on a miserable Jewish pedlar. A minute more and I was at home, even in Damascus.*

* We are indebted for the photographs from which our engravings have been taken, to the special permission of Madame Bonfils, of Beyrout, who publishes a large and very beautiful collection of Oriental photographs which tourists would do well to inspect.

BOY AND MAN:

A TALE FOR YOUNG AND OLD.

CHAPTER XVII.—SHYLOCK.

"But in the way of bargain, mark ye me,
I'll cavil on the ninth part of a hair."—*Shakespeare.*

AMONG the new boys this half was one named Slocum, who had been at school before, and who found himself at home immediately at Mr. Bearward's. It was evidently what he had been accustomed to, and the only occasion that he found for complaint or dissatisfaction arose out of the new fashions, as he called them, brought in by a few boys for the annoyance and bother of the rest. "Where's the good," he argued, "of having prayers twice over? Isn't there prayers in school? People may be religious without making such a fuss about it. Where I was before we used to have jolly good fun in the dormitories every night; singing and bolstering and telling stories; and hot suppers cooked at the cake-shop, and drawn up through the window with a string. That was something like! I don't mean to put up with this sort of thing long, I can tell you."

He was a sharp-featured, cunning-looking boy, this Slocum, with black hair, and bushy eyebrows meeting together above a large aquiline nose, small restless eyes and thin lips, drawn tightly, as it seemed, over a set of large, projecting teeth. He usually went about with his hands in his pockets, jingling a few halfpence, and asking other boys how much money they had left, and if they would like to borrow some; because, if they would, he could accommodate them, and they could pay it back next week, when they had their allowance.

It was very kind of him, some of the little boys thought, to offer such accommodation; and when the cake-stall was opened in the playground on half-holidays, they were much tempted to borrow of him. The only condition he required was that they should entrust him with a pocket-knife or some other valuable by way of security, and pay twopence at the week's end for every penny borrowed. He also

carried on a traffic in bread-and-butter, purchasing for a few halfpence, paid in advance to those who were improvident enough to deal with him, one of the three slices which each boy received at breakfast-time and tea-time for a week; which slices he sold to others at an advanced price, collecting and delivering them in a thoroughly business-like manner after each meal. Now and then a boy who had sold his "thirds," carried away by force of appetite, would eat what ought to have been saved and delivered. But Slocum had an unpleasant way of retaliating when he was thus defrauded, seizing the defaulter by the feet, and turning him upside down until—but enough! *Si quisque furetur, sic ille pendetur* was his argument on these occasions. It was a grim joke; and, like Shylock's pound of flesh, brought no advantage to the creditor. But Slocum would have his bond. Hanging was the fashion in those days. Boys had been hanged by the neck instead of the heels for stealing a morsel of bread, without the butter, and Slocum considered that he was fully justified by the laws of the land in executing the sentence in its modified form as above described.

John Armiger, however, when he saw, one day, a boy of ten years old being treated in this way, thought otherwise. Catching the victim by the shoulders, he endeavoured to restore him to his natural position; but as Slocum would not let go of his heels, and other boys hastened to assist at either end, without stopping to inquire into the merits of the case, the poor boy was in danger of being pulled to pieces, which would have been a return to the old punishment for treason, quartering; or to the barbarism of tearing an offender limb from limb by wild "asses," as one of the spectators remarked. Armiger began to think that he had not done much good by his knight-errantry this time; but as Mr. Sprigg was presently attracted by the cries of the victim, his persecutors all let go of him at the same moment, and he fell to the ground with a bump.

He was not much hurt, however; and some good resulted, for an inquiry was made into the origin of the disturbance, and the facts were reported to Mr. Bearward. It was a case that he felt bound to take notice of, chiefly because it seemed to reflect upon the supply of bread-and-butter; but he was at a loss how to deal with it.

"I wish you would not trouble me about such trifles," he said to Mr. Sprigg. "You should deal summarily with cases of this kind, and see that there is no repetition of them. I can't flog a boy for lending money or carrying on a commerce in bread-and-butter."

Mr. Sprigg, who had been much impressed with the success of the monitorial system in the bedrooms, suggested that the offender should be left to some of the big boys, for them to judge and punish him.

"Lynch law!" cried Mr. Bearward; "lynch law at Cubbinghame!"

"Trial by jury, rather," Mr. Sprigg replied; "with an appeal to the higher court, yourself, if necessary."

"Ahem! it might do very well," said Mr. Bearward, beginning, as he thought, to see a way out of his embarrassment. "Let the monitors of the dormitories confer together and decide what steps to take; subject, of course, to my approval."

The monitors, eight in number, were called together, and an inquiry was instituted into Slocum's usurious practices. The little boys who had been induced to borrow money, and had suffered in consequence, were confronted with their creditor, and encouraged to make their troubles known; and then the eight retired into a corner of the schoolroom to consider their verdict.

"I propose Lex talionis," said one.

"How do you mean?" Sparrow asked. "I wish you would speak English."

"Slocum has been in the habit of making these boys gorge. Let us serve him the same."

"What, hang him up by the heels?"

"No; make him produce his money-bag, for he must have one somewhere, and refund; that will do for the present. If he offends again, *'sic ille pendetur.'*"

The verdict was approved; and, with Mr. Bearward's sanction, immediately put into execution. Slocum was ordered to bring forth his ill-gotten gains, and restore to each of the boys the money he had unjustly taken from him. It was a very painful operation; almost as painful as the alternative above described, but there was no avoiding it. At first the boy declared, with loud asseverations, that he had no money belonging to him beyond the few halfpence that were in his pockets. Then his box was brought, and he was desired to open it, but he protested he had lost the key. The key was discovered tied to a string which he wore round his neck—"by anticipation," Hawkes remarked. The box contained a variety of odds and ends—knives, pencils, sheets of paper, and other articles—which he had taken in pledge; quite a little pawnbroker's shop. There were also slices of stale bread-and-butter, mouldy apples, knobs of cheese, and a cold red-herring toasted. Underneath all these a bag was found full of copper coins, with some silver wrapped up separately in paper.

Slocum seemed almost frantic when he beheld his treasury turned out, the pledges restored, and money he had received as interest returned to those from

whom it had been extorted; but all his entreaties, all his threats, all his loud, abusive epithets, were of no avail. The money that remained after all claimants had been reimbursed was replaced in the bag, and Slocum was then desired to take his box of rubbish and empty it upon the dustheap.

"It must be scrubbed inside and out before it is again admitted to the box-room," said Hawkes. "*Non redolet, sed olet.*"

"How can you say '*Non redolet*'?" cried another boy, pointing to the red-herring. "Take it away, Shylock, but be careful with it; don't eat it all at once." And he went by the name of Shylock from that time forth, as long as he remained at Cubbinghame.

Mr. Bearward was so well satisfied with the result of this judicial process that he determined to extend the power of the monitors by giving them a general authority to deal with offences of a minor kind, and to maintain order in the playground as well as in the dormitories. It would save him a great deal of trouble, he thought, and put an end to the complaints which had been made of late by some of the parents of the frequency and severity of the punishments inflicted by himself. Thus, a system of self-government was established among the boys, and many evils which no master's eye, however vigilant, could detect (and the masters at Cubbinghame were not vigilant) were brought to light, and many mischievous designs prevented.

So the days passed on, till, as winter again approached, and the quicksilver in the thermometer fell lower and lower, the spirits of the schoolboys rose in an inverse ratio, and happy thoughts of home and holidays became more powerful and constant. Sticks were cut and almanacks blotted and blurred after the usual fashion; inscriptions appeared upon the doors and walls—"Only three weeks—Hurrah! Only two weeks—Hurrah! hurrah! Only one week to the holidays—Hurrah! hurrah! hurrah!" "Stir-up Sunday" was welcomed as a harbinger of Christmas; and the clergyman, when he began the collect with those words, was looked upon as an ally and a friend. At length the trunks were packed, the great-coats and comforters brought out and distributed, and in the cold grey December morning all the boys started off with light hearts and red noses by the several conveyances which were to bring them to their homes; and silence reigned once more in Cubbinghame.

CHAPTER XVIII.—SHYLOCK AGAIN.

"Whatever lies or legendary tales
May taint my spotless deeds, the guilt, the shame,
Shall back revert on the inventor's head."—*Shirley.*

THE monitorial system which had been established at Cubbinghame was maintained in full vigour during the greater part of the next half-year. It had originated as if accidentally and by force of circumstances, from the determined action of one boy, John Armiger, who had not the slightest idea when he entered his dormitory on that first night of his return to school and knelt down by his bedside to say his prayers that such a result would follow. Who, indeed, could have anticipated such consequences, so easily and so quickly brought about? Even now he was not conscious of having been in any sense the author of this salutary change; and though he told the whole story to Mrs. Judd, he took no credit to himself, nor did the thought occur to his mind that any such was due for the benefits that had

ensued. There were two or three new boys at the school after the Christmas holidays; but some of the elder ones had left, so that the numbers were not increased. Matters went on in the old routine, and another half-year was drawing to a close before anything occurred at Mr. Bearward's school worthy of being chronicled. The monitorial system worked well to a certain extent; and if Mr. Bearward had taken the trouble to direct it a little, and had possessed sufficient hold upon the confidence and affection of his pupils to give him a decided influence with them, some inconveniences which arose from time to time would have been avoided. Boys are but boys; and though generally right in their instincts, are very liable to error in their judgments. Too much power or authority is not good for any of us, whether young or old. Mr. Bearward, unfortunately, neither trusted his monitors nor assisted them temperately with his advice; he had appointed them to their office only to save himself trouble, and he either left them to themselves to do as they would, or interfered in an arbitrary manner to complain or punish whenever he felt himself instigated by temper or his wife to do so.

The boy Slocum had not been deterred by the *Lex talionis* from continuing his usurious practices, but he did so with more secrecy and circumspection. He had lent money to several of the boys before they went home at Christmas, receiving their written promises to repay five-fold on their return, or half-a-crown for every sixpence. He had gone on afterwards lending halfpence at the beginning of the week, and receiving pennies at the end of it when the pocket-money was given out; and there had been many a dispute between him and his victims, of which neither the monitors nor any one else took much notice. There was an unfortunate boy, named Small, who had borrowed threepence, and being unable to repay it had been told, week after week, that the sum was doubling itself at compound interest, and that it must be paid as soon as he should receive a heavy letter from home, which he expected on his birthday. The birthday came, and the letter also, containing half-a-sovereign. Of this Slocum claimed seven shillings and ninepence, the threepence having mounted up to that sum by arithmetical progression in four weeks. Small resisted the demand, but offered Slocum a shilling, which he took as an instalment, and went on, by threats and persecutions, to extort the balance. Small paid another shilling, and then declared he would tell the monitors; and Slocum, fearing the consequences, at length desisted from his importunities.

Two days later it was found that Small's box had been opened, apparently with a false key, and the whole of his money abstracted from it. Suspicion fell upon Slocum, who denied all knowledge of the theft. He wanted his own, he said, and could not get his own; it was too bad to be accused of taking what did not belong to him into the bargain; he believed it was some of those pious parties, who pretended to be better than their neighbours, but were just as fond of money as other boys. He wouldn't stand being accused in that way, and having his character taken away, but would tell Mr. Bearward.

The monitors consulted together and with Mr. Sprigg, and decided that, in a serious case like this, they also must appeal to Mr. Bearward. They did not, indeed, expect much assistance from their master, for he always told them to settle their affairs among

themselves, making a great show of confidence in their judgment, though sometimes finding fault with them afterwards. But this was a very serious case, a case for hanging, according to the criminal code of England, if it had occurred a few years earlier; and the monitors resolved to make a strict inquiry, and to send up the thief to Mr. Bearward for exemplary punishment, if they could detect him. The box had been left among the others in the box-room, and Small had seen his purse there, with the money in it, at bedtime one Thursday evening, and had locked it up securely. The following morning he had found the box still locked, and everything apparently as he had left it, except the purse, which was empty. That was all he could say about it; he did not suspect anybody. Slocum had been teasing him to pay him fine and ninepence, which he said he owed him, and if that sum only had been taken, he should have thought that Slocum had helped himself to it; but it was all gone—six and fourpence. Notice was published in the schoolroom that if any boy could offer information, or throw any light upon the matter, he must do so; and several of the boys offered scraps of evidence, which, when put all together, amounted to almost nothing.

A boy, pushed forward by his schoolfellows after much whispering, deposed that he had seen a light in the box-room on the night in question—Thursday night; he was looking out of his bedroom-window, and saw the light moving about as if some one were looking in the boxes. Being asked how lights generally moved when people were looking into boxes, he said, "Sideways, here and there." Another boy asserted that Rowland, one of the four boys who slept in his dormitory, had been out late that night, and had not come up to bed till all the others were asleep. "Was he asleep also?" he was asked. "Yes, but woke up when the door opened, and saw Rowland come in in the dark." There was no monitor for that room, it being a small one, and all the boys in it very young. Rowland was interrogated; he acknowledged that he had been up late, but not in the box-room; he had gone back to the schoolroom to look for his dictionary, which he had lent to another boy, who had left it lying about instead of taking the trouble to return it.

At this point the matter rested for several days, suspicion being directed towards Rowland, but no proofs forthcoming.

Mr. Bearward, being in school next day, after he had heard his class, inquired whether anything had been discovered as to the theft, and was told how matters stood. He then called for silence, and made a speech, looking very stern and resolute the while, declaring that he possessed a certain clue which would inevitably bring the offender to justice, and recommending him to confess his fault and ask for mercy while there was yet time; otherwise his punishment, when discovered, should be of such severity as to serve as an example for all unprincipled boys, and put an end to all transgressions of the eighth Commandment as long as Cubbinghame should remain as a place of Christian education.

This announcement caused a great sensation, and there was much whispering and wondering when school was over, Rowland feeling himself especially an object of suspicion, though his name had not been mentioned.

The next day, which was a half-holiday, Armiger found this boy Rowland lying on the grass in the

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playfield, looking very miserable; and, sitting down by his side, began to talk to him.

Slocum had been taunting him, he said, as if he were guilty of the theft, and telling him that it would certainly be traced home to him, and that he had better confess at once, so as to get off with moderate punishment. "As if I cared for the punishment more than for anything else!" he exclaimed, indignantly.

"But if you are innocent," said Armiger, "you need not care what such a fellow as Slocum says."

"If!" said Rowland; "I know no more about the theft than you do. Do you think I would touch anything that did not belong to me? Get out, do!"

"I don't think so," said Armiger; "but somebody must have taken the money. If you deny it, I believe you, and shall be very glad if I can help you to find out who is the real culprit. What led this fellow Slocum to talk to you about it?"

"I don't know; unless it is that some of the boys think he is the thief; several of them say it lies between him and me. I was up late that night when the money was taken; so much the worse for me; I only went to get my dictionary so as not to be fined for leaving it about."

"All I can say," said Armiger, in reply, "is that I will do anything to help you out of the suspicion if you can only show me how. If you think of anything, come and tell me."

The next morning Rowland came to him, much more distressed than before. "I have found it," he said.

"Found what?"

"The money—on my shelf, behind my books. I suppose it is Small's money, I know it isn't mine; it was there this morning when I went to fetch my Latin grammar."

Armiger looked at him suspiciously.

"I thought you would not believe me," he cried, bursting into tears; "and if you won't, who will? I wish I had thrown it away or hidden it; none of the other boys saw me find it, and I was so startled and frightened that I put it into my pocket in a moment, and need not have told you or any one else."

"Well, don't say a word about it; we must think it over. I do believe you; but we must be careful. We will tell Mr. Sprigg and the monitors, and leave it in their hands. Don't be afraid; God will make it all right for you."

Mr. Sprigg was consulted, and the purse handed over to him with many protestations from poor Rowland. There was a consultation, or a levy, as they called it, of the monitors; and after school, when Mr. Bearward was not present, for he was suffering with a fit of the gout that day, the boys were ordered to sit still and deliver up their keys to Mr. Sparrow, who went round the desks collecting them.

"We are not going to meddle with your boxes," he said; "and you shall have your keys again presently." Many of them had no keys; they were lost. Others had no boxes. Slocum's key was found as before, tied to a "noose" round his neck, but he protested there was nothing in his box; they might search it if they liked, but he would go with them and see what they were after.

"We are not going to touch your box," said Sparrow; "we only want your key."

The keys being collected, Small was desired to

bring his box up into the schoolroom, and there, in the presence of all the boys, trial was made which of the keys would fit. It was a common kind of lock, and any key almost that would go into it would open it.

"It seems to have no wards," said one of the monitors, peering into the lock. "If there ever were any they have been broken off."

"That might have been done in forcing it," said another.

Altogether, no less than five keys were found which would open Small's box. One of these was Rowland's; another was Slocum's; a third was Sparrow's, at which there was, as modern police reports say in most cases, however serious and shocking, "a laugh." The other two keys belonged to two little boys, who were as much beneath suspicion as Sparrow was above it.

"It lies between those two," was whispered again; but the five keys were retained for the present, and all the rest, which would not fit the box, were returned to their owners, and the school dismissed.

Small was afterwards called up, and the money which Rowland had produced delivered to him. It was the exact amount which he had lost, two half-crowns, two sixpences, and four pennies.

"Is it the same money?" one of them asked.

"Are they the same coins?"

"Yes," said Small. "At least, not exactly. There was a sixpence with a hole in it. I remember that because, when I changed the half-sovereign, Mrs. Berry pointed to it, and said it was a lucky sixpence, and I must keep it. Neither of these sixpences has a hole in it."

"That may lead to something," said Sparrow; "don't say a word about it to any one. We must keep our eyes and ears open and our tongues still, in the hope of further discoveries."

Varieties.

RAILWAY ACCIDENTS.—A recent return of railway accidents states that, as a passenger train was starting from Broad Street, on the North London line, the crank axle of the engine broke. The axle had run no less than 459,288 miles before it failed. It was made of cast steel, by Messrs. Krupp, of Essen, Prussia. If record is kept of the length of service of all "rolling stock" on our railways, it is to be hoped that doubtful metal will be renewed in less time than is required for wearing out Krupp's famous steel. An axle "failing" after running nearly half a million of miles can hardly be classed as "an accident."

INVARIABLE WEIGHTS.—A question has been raised as to variability of platinum weights in process of time. The Warden of the Standards shows, in his recent report, that the weight of the English platinum kilogram of the Standards Department was found in 1875 to be practically unchanged since it was weighed, with the greatest care and accuracy, in 1845, and that its utmost possible loss of weight in that period could not have exceeded three parts out of 10,000,000. But though the platinum standard weights have thus been found unaltered by atmospheric influences, the slight changes observed in a few exceptional cases being attributable to improper preparation of the metal, yet pure platinum is too soft a material to stand the friction of much use without losing some of its weight. This defect, it is found, may be remedied by combining with the platinum about ten per cent. of iridium. An alloyed metal is thus produced as hard as steel, such as has been adopted for the new international standard kilograms by the Metric Commission at Paris.

POST-OFFICE SAVINGS BANKS.—Mr. Macdonald, M.P., has obtained a return relative to the Post-office and other savings

banks for the last ten years. In 1865 the number of depositors was 1,468,490, and the amount £38,745,298. Of the number and the amounts raised in the succeeding years, the number never reached the first years given, nor the amounts until the year 1871. In 1874 (the last year given) there were 1,464,306 depositors, and the amount was £41,466,399 as to savings banks. With respect to Post-office savings banks, the depositors numbered 611,384 in 1865, when the amount invested with interest was £3,851,887, and there was at the end of the year due to depositors £6,526,400. In 1874 the largest amount in the ten years was invested, being £8,865,815, and the total amount due to 1,668,733 depositors, the greatest number in the period, £23,157,469.

THEODORE HOOK AND THE LOTTERY MAN.—The account of lotteries in the "Leisure Hour" for January, and of the dire results often caused by the spirit of gambling, recalls an anecdote of Hook, told by Mr. Julian Young in his "Recollections":—"Theodore Hook dined at General Moore's, and as usual was the life of the party. His wit and humour, his sayings and doings, his pranks and his practical jokes, his hoaxes and political squibs, are so well known that I am almost afraid to reproduce any of them, lest I should be accused of bringing stale goods to market. However, I do not think the two following stories, which he told us yesterday, have ever been in print. Not long since, he went by stage-coach to Sudbourne, to stay with Lord Hertford. Inside the coach he had but one companion, a brown-faced, melancholy-looking man, with an expression of great querulousness, quite in character with the tone of his conversation, which was one of ceaseless complaining. 'Sir,' said he, 'you may have known unfortunate men, possibly, in your day—you may, for aught I know, be an unfortunate man yourself—but I do not believe there is such another unfortunate man as I am in the whole world. No man ever had more brilliant prospects than I have had in my time, and every one of them, on the very eve of fulfilment, has been blighted. 'Twas but the other day that I thought I would buy a ticket in the lottery. I did so, stupid ass that I was, and took a sixteenth. Sir, I had no sooner bought it than I repented of my folly, and, feeling convinced that it would be a blank, I got rid of it to a friend, who I knew would thank me for the favour, and at the same time save me from another disappointment. Sir, would you believe it? I know you won't; but it is true,—it turned up £30,000.' 'What?' said Hook. 'It is incredible. If it had happened to me I should certainly have cut my throat.' 'Well,' said he, 'of course you would, and so did I;' and, baring his neck, he exposed to Hook's horror-stricken gaze a freshly-healed cicatrix from ear to ear."

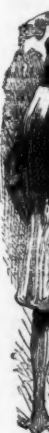
ELEPHANT BATTUES.—It seems a pity to destroy, for the sake of simple sport, such useful, intelligent animals as elephants. In destroying tigers and other strictly wild and destructive beasts, the sportsmen perform a public service, and this knowledge doubtless adds additional zest to the enterprise, but the wholesale destruction of these huge and valuable assistants to man, on the plea of sport, when their hunting and capture for domestication would be equally exciting and far more instructive, is a proceeding repugnant alike to the teachings of our flag, and to our humane ideas of advanced civilisation. If the risk of life from the furious charge of a wounded bull elephant is required to establish the courage of their future king in the eyes of his Eastern Empire, let some other plan be devised, and let his millions of half-civilised subjects practically associate his visit with recollections of mercy rather than with the wanton slaughter of animals almost idolised for their utility, tractability—the most powerful, and yet the most docile creatures in the universe. Wanton waste brings woeful want. The commercial loss, though large, in an elephant battue is not of so much consequence as the example. The wanton slaughter of buffaloes of late years on the American prairies, and of moose deer in Canada, has already excited the action of their respective governments, and nearly every State of the Union has been compelled to pass severe repressive game laws to prevent the extermination of many of the indigenous birds and beasts, and this, too, in a wild country with almost unlimited range. We trust to hear that the royal party will have plenty of sport in every legitimate sense, but elephant battues are not legitimate sport. Sport is a misnomer; it is simple butchery.—*Land and Water.*

DALTON IN LOVE.—The Quaker philosopher lived in "single blessedness," and died a bachelor, but he was not insensible to the charms of the fair sex, according to his own confession in his journal: "I never met with a character so finished as

Hannah's. What is called strength of mind and sound judgment she possesses in a very eminent degree, with the rare coincidence of a quick apprehension and most lively imagination. Of sensibility she has a full share, but does not affectedly show it on every trivial occasion. The sick and poor of all descriptions are her personal care. Though undoubtedly accustomed to grave and serious reflections, all pensiveness and melancholy are banished from her presence, and nothing but cheerfulness and hilarity diffused around. Her uncommon natural abilities have been improved by cultivation, but art and form do not appear at all in her manner—all is free, open, and unaffected. Extremely affable to all, though every one sees and acknowledges her superiority, no one can charge her with pride. She is, as might be expected, well pleased with the conversation of literary and scientific people, and has herself produced some essays that would do credit to the first geniuses of the age, though they are scarcely known out of the family, so little is her vanity. Her person is agreeable, active, and lively. She supports conversation, whether serious, argumentative, or jocular, with uncommon address. In short, the *tout ensemble* is the most complete I ever beheld. Next to Hannah, her sister Ann takes it, in my eye, before all others. She is a perfect model of personal beauty. I do not know one that will bear a comparison with her in this respect, at least in our society. With abilities much superior to the generality, she possesses the most refined sensibility, but in strength of mind and vigour of understanding must yield to her elder sister. I dwell with pleasure upon the character of these two amiable creatures, but would not have them communicate my sentiments to others."—*Dr. Lonsdale's "Worthies of Cumberland."*

NAPOLEON DEMENTED.—This architect of his own fortune, this great thinker, this observer, once so sagacious, so prompt in mastering circumstances that could serve his turn, had come to this—infant-like he fell into a passion with the quiet and sovereign power of reality. He regarded facts that unluckily did not please him as though they did not exist, or rather he treated them like courtiers in revolt, whom a great king dismisses and drives away from his presence. He no longer deigned to enter into a discussion about the force of things as they are. An obstacle was not an obstacle if he refused to see it. Such had he been made by ten years of absolute power! One day, nevertheless, one of the last days of 1811, this year that was ending so gloomily, a ray of prudence and reason passed across that spirit already possessed by delusions, and Napoleon wrote to his librarian for "information as complete as possible on the campaign of Charles XII in Poland and Russia." What a lesson lay in that name of Charles XII and in the recollections of Pul-towa! It was not chance that brought to his pen that fateful word. What was he to see in it? A presentiment? A last warning of destiny? Or was he merely to find an occasion to plume himself at the expense of the great Swedish adventurer? We know not what impressions his study made on him, but we know the lesson was useless. Everything, even the means of safety, becomes a snare and a peril to those who will their own destruction.—*M. Lanfrey.*

JEWS PURCHASING LAND IN SYRIA.—The committee of the Sir Moses Montefiore Testimonial Fund state in their report that the total amount of subscriptions received is £10,682, a portion of this being payable by annual instalments in forthcoming years. Having taken into consideration the expressed views of Sir Moses, and attentively considered various suggestions, the committee have unanimously resolved to expend this sum in the purchase of ground in the Holy Land, in the building of houses there, in establishing a loan fund, and in aiding the able-bodied inhabitants in agricultural and trading pursuits, or in such of those objects as the committee may from time to time deem expedient. At a meeting held at the Portuguese Synagogue, Bevis Marks, presided over by Mr. Joseph M. Montefiore, these recommendations were adopted by the general committee. It was suggested that a portion of the money should be applied to providing secular education to the Jews of Palestine, and, after a protracted discussion, the chairman ruled that no part of the fund could be thus applied. [We have always understood that the Jewish authorities strenuously objected to the purchase of land in Syria. The land belongs to the Jewish people by right, and they expect to recover it "in the fulness of time," without the cost or the disgrace of purchase. Now that this sentiment is broken in upon, it is possible that the purchase of land may extend. A good round sum from the Jews would be a windfall to the Sultan and to Turkish bondholders.]



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